

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 12190 311442Z
ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 HUD-01 COME-00 CIAE-00
INR-10 NSAE-00 OES-07 L-03 /042 W
-----022245 010348Z /14
R 311426Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2368

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DEPT PASS HUD FOR HANCOCK

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: TECH, TGEN, UR, US
SUBJECT: US-USSR HOUSING AGREEMENT: NEW TOWNS (10.06)

1. US NEW TOWNS DELEGATION HEADED BY WILLIAM WHITE, GENERAL MANAGER OF THE NEW COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORP., RECENTLY VISITED EMBASSY TO REPORT ON MOSCOW PORTION OF THE DELEGATION'S PROGRAM IN THE USSR. US AND SOVIET SPECIALISTS ARE CURRENTLY COOPERATING ON TWO JOINT REPORTS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE NEW TOWNS WORKING GROUP. THE REPORT ON "PLANNING OF NEW TOWNS" IS ALMOST COMPLETED AND BOTH SIDES HOPE TO HAVE FINAL JOINT VERSION READY BY THE TIME OF THE HOUSING AGREEMENT JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING (JCM) IN SEPTEMBER, 1978. REPORT ON MANAGEMENT OF NEW TOWNS CONTINUES TO BE PLAGUED BY DIFFERENT US AND SOVIET CONCEPTIONS OF THE TERM "MANAGEMENT." SOVIETS INTERPRET THE TERM MORE NARROWLY THAN THE US, WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON USE OF COMPUTERS AND MATHEMATICAL MODELING. HOWEVER, DURING THE MEETINGS IN MOSCOW THE TWO PARTIES AGREED TO CONTINUE EFFORTS TO BRIDGE THIS PROBLEM WITH THE AIM OF PREPARING A JOINT INTRODUCTION FOR THE REPORT BY THE JCM. US HAD PROPOSED TO DRAFT SEPARATE NATIONAL REPORTS ON

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"MANAGEMENT OF NEW TOWNS," WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE WORKING GROUP, BUT SOVIET COCHAIRMAN KUDRYAVTSEV CLAIMED THAT THIS WOULD BE "A STEP BACKWARD" IN US-SOVIET COOPERATION IN THIS AREA.

2. DURING THE MEETING THE SOVIETS PRESSED THE US DELEGATION TO AGREE TO AN EXTENSIVE NEW PROGRAM OF COOPERATIVE ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE

WORKING GROUP, INCLUDING ACTIVITY WHICH WOULD HAVE CONTINUED INTO 1980, I.E., BEYOND THE PRESENT TERM OF THE AGREEMENT. AFTER CONSIDERABLE SOVIET URGING THE US DELEGATION AGREED TO ADD ONE NEW PROJECT -- ENVIRONMENTAL CRITERIA IN SITE SELECTION FOR NEW TOWNS. THE TWO DELEGATIONS ALSO AGREED TO AN EXCHANGE OF LONG TERM (UP TO ONE MONTH) SPECIALISTS IN NEW TOWNS, WHICH BOTH SIDES BELIEVE SHOULD BE USEFUL. IN ADDITION, THE PARTIES AGREED TO EXCHANGE US AND SOVIET BUILDING CODES. US DELEGATION MEMBERS NOTED THAT USSR HAS CENTRALIZED BUILDING CODES FOR EACH REPUBLIC BUT THESE CODES ARE HANDLED IN THE US ON A LOCAL BASIS, WHICH MAY CAUSE SOME DIFFICULTY IN GATHERING INFORMATION EQUIVALENT TO CENTRALIZED SOVIET CODES.

3. THE DISCUSSIONS WERE CONDUCTED IN A FRIENDLY ATMOSPHERE BUT THE US DELEGATION NOTED THAT SOVIETS SEEMED ANXIOUS TO ENSURE THAT COOPERATION WOULD CONTINUE IN THIS AGREEMENT AND ALSO SEEMED NERVOUS ABOUT THE POSSIBLE EXPIRATION OF THE AGREEMENT. AT ONE POINT CO-CHAIRMAN KUDRYAVTSEV STATED, "IT WOULD BE A TRAGEDY IF OUR COOPERATION DID NOT CONTINUE."

4. COMMENT. WHITE COMMENTED THAT EXCHANGE OF DELEGATIONS AND INFORMATION WHICH HAS OCCURRED UNDER THE NEW TOWNS WORKING GROUP HAS GENERALLY BEEN EQUIVALENT AND MUTUALLY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BENEFICIAL. EMBASSY NOTED THAT THIS HAS PROBABLY BEEN ONE OF THE SMOOTHEST FUNCTIONING OF THE SIX HOUSING AGREEMENT WORKING GROUPS AND ONE WHICH HAS PRODUCED SOME OF THE MOST CONCRETE JOINT COOPERATIVE WORK, ALTHOUGH CHIEF BENEFIT TO THE US MAY BE IN EXPOSURE TO "NEGATIVE EXAMPLE" PROVIDED BY SOVIET NEW TOWNS. SOVIET CONCERN ABOUT US INTENTIONS WITH RESPECT TO THE RENEWAL OF THE HOUSING AGREEMENT IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY EVIDENT AS THE JCM DRAWS NEARER AND AS WE BEGIN TO APPROACH THE POINT AT WHICH RENEWAL DECISION WILL HAVE TO BE COMMUNICATED TO THE SOVIETS (DECEMBER 28, 1978). PROPERLY HANDLED, THIS SOVIET CONCERN SHOULD PROVIDE US A USEFUL LEVER TO OBTAIN FROM THE SOVIETS MORE SUBSTANTIVE COOPERATIVE ACTIVITIES. MATLOCK

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: HOUSING, AGREEMENTS, INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION, VISITS, MEETING DELEGATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 31 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978MOSCOW12190
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780228-0719
Format: TEL
From: MOSCOW
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t1978053/aaaaacjy.tel
Line Count: 108
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 04960799-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2606669
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: US-USSR HOUSING AGREEMENT: NEW TOWNS (10.06)
TAGS: TECH, TGEN, UR, US, (WHITE, WILLIAM)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/04960799-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014